
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6518

AN ACT CONCERNING STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL.

SUMMARY:

This bill expands the grounds upon which the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner can take disciplinary action against emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or advanced EMTs. It allows her to take action against them for the same conduct for which she may already discipline paramedics, such as felony convictions, alcohol or drug abuse, and negligence in professional activities.

By law, EMTs and advanced EMTs must be certified by DPH.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

DPH DISCIPLINE OF EMTS

The bill expands the allowable grounds for DPH to discipline EMTs and advanced EMTs to include:

1. failure to conform to accepted professional standards;
2. felony conviction;
3. fraud or deceit in obtaining or reinstating a certificate to practice;
4. fraud or deceit in practice;
5. negligent, incompetent, or wrongful conduct in professional activities;
6. physical, mental, or emotional illness or disorder resulting in an inability to conform to accepted professional standards;
7. alcohol or substance abuse;

8. willful falsification of entries in medical records; or
9. violation of the paramedicine law or regulations (see COMMENT).

Existing law allows the DPH commissioner to discipline emergency medical services (EMS) professionals (including EMTs or advanced EMTs) who fail to maintain standards or violate applicable EMS regulations (CGS § 19a-180(b)). Existing DPH regulations allow the commissioner to take specified disciplinary actions against EMS professionals she determines substantially failed to comply with the EMS law or regulations or failed to maintain professional standards (Conn. Agency Regs. § 19a-179-15(a)).

By law, the possible disciplinary actions DPH can take include:

1. suspending or revoking the person's certification,
2. issuing a letter of reprimand to or censuring the person,
3. placing him or her on probation,
4. assessing a civil penalty of up to \$25,000, or
5. taking summary action against the certification if the person has been found guilty of a state or federal felony or subject to disciplinary action in another jurisdiction.

Under the bill, DPH can petition the Hartford Superior Court to enforce any such orders or actions against EMTs or advanced EMTs. It must give the person notice and an opportunity for a hearing.

The bill allows the commissioner to order a certificate holder to undergo a reasonable physical or mental examination if his or her physical or mental capacity to practice safely is under investigation.

COMMENT

The bill allows the DPH commissioner to discipline EMTs for violations under the statutory definition of paramedicine. By law and

regulation, paramedics are authorized to perform certain actions that are beyond the scope of practice of certain levels of EMT certification.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 1 (04/05/2013)